

Speech
presented by Hon. Mr. Apichat KARIKANJANA
Leader of the Thai Delegation
at the 1st session of the General Assembly of Forum of Asia
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Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Honorable Parliamentarians,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Delegation of Thailand, I would like to convey my sincere gratitude and appreciation to H.E. Mr. Marzuki Alie, Speaker of the Indonesian House of Representatives and President of FASPPED for hosting the first session of the General Assembly of FASPPED and hospitality extended to us. I am sure that with your dedication and cooperation, the successful outcome will be concluded.

The Thai Delegation is honored to participate in this event which is considered a parliamentary forum for promotion of the role of parliamentary in developing education on matters of mutual interest and common concern in Asia Pacific region. I am, therefore, very pleased to present my views on essential matters of the forum.

Mr. President,

Regarding the current situation in Thailand, the Government and the Parliament have been working under the democratic principle and rules of law to strengthen the democracy, stabilize the economy, and carry forward the

political reform in accordance with the system of democratic governance in which the Head of State is the King.

Excellencies,

The current Thai Education system stems from the reforms set by the 1999 National Education Act which implemented new organizational structures, promoted the decentralization of administration and called for innovative learner-centred teaching practices. The Thai education system provides 9 years of compulsory education, with 12 years of free basic education guaranteed by the Constitution. It aims at the full development of the Thai people in all aspects: physical and mental health; intellect; knowledge; morality; integrity; and a desirable way of life so as to be able to live happily with other people. This is to serve the following visions:

- Empowering the Thai people to attain quality education and capacity building for self-development
- Building a knowledge-based society and economic development
- Enhancing international competitiveness in the international arena

Among other things, “**Lifelong Education for All**” is an emphasis of the current education reform in Thailand. It serves as a major principle of education provision which means education resulting from the integration of formal, non-formal and informal education so as to create the ability for continuous lifelong development of quality of life.

The parliament in accordance with the Ministry of Education are leading the transformation of the education system with a strategy based upon enhancing moral and ethical

values together with a core program for improving quality in education.

To meet the goal of EFA, the government has adopted 3 operational strategies for the year 2007 – 2016;

- instituting EFA policy as a public and sustaining over time,
- mobilizing resources to promote and support achievement of EFA, and
- promoting and supporting efficient provision of EFA.

The government has worked hard in order to cope with basic problems and obstacles of Thai Education system such as:

- lack of opportunity for some target groups,
- economic disparity, distribution disparity of population's income, and
- the difficulty of expansion of educational opportunity to the disadvantaged , the poor, the disabilities and ethnic minorities.

To support EFA achievement efficiently, Thailand's National Education reform plan indicated that the government approved priority areas:

- Quality of Education for Learners,
- Teacher Training and Development,
- Education Administration and Management,
- Expanding Education Opportunities,
- Human Resources Development,
- Education Financing,
- Education Technology, and
- Life Long Education.

According to the Life Long Education, Office of the Non – Formal and Informal Education prepared to propose

the “Life long Education Act” to the parliament in the next session mention on;

- enlarging the Knowledge - based society of the adults,
- encouraging the reading habit of the aging,
- improving the earning of life in the rural area,
- arranging how to conserve the environment, and
- creating the thinking system of the learners.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

One assumption, if I may draw from this forum, is that the participating countries have launched their reform as a national agenda. This Forum therefore should be a venue where international participants will exchange views, ideas as well as lesson learnt. It would indeed be a success if this Forum results in concrete measures for cooperation for education development among participating countries.

Mr. President,

I would like to reiterate that we have a strong intention to broaden and deepen Thailand’s cooperation with you all in the FASPPED framework, bilateral level to achieve our mutual goals and to establish the more effective FASPPED. Honorable parliamentarians, permit me to wish the first session of the General Assembly of Forum of Asia Pacific Parliamentarians for Education (FASPPED) the most successful and productive outcome.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.